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TAGS: [PINS](#) [PHUM](#) [PAO](#) [SCUL](#) [KDEM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: KAJBAR VIDEO SYMBOLIZES SUFFERING OF DARFUR AND
THE SUDANESE PEOPLE AS A WHOLE

REF: A. KHARTOUM 711
[1](#)B. KHARTOUM 968

Classified By: CDA Fernandez, for reasons 1.4 (a) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: On June 14, police killed four demonstrators protesting the construction of a dam near Kajbar (reftel) . Several days later, a ten minute video of the dead and wounded from Kajbar appeared on the Internet. On June 20, in the Sudanese independent daily "Al-Ayaam," Murtadi Al-Ghali, a professor of journalism at the University of Khartoum, reflected on watching the Kajbar video, comparing the documented images from Kajbar to the unseen atrocities in Darfur. Unlike Iraq or Afghanistan, videos documenting battle scenes or the resulting dead or wounded rarely originate from Sudan. Although the Kajbar incident may have resulted in few casualties, the video may become a symbol for the suffering of the Sudanese people and the brutality of their government. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (U) On June 19, video footage of the dead and hospitalized from Kajbar appeared on the popular video sharing site "YouTube." The video provides footage of corpses with gunshot wounds to heads, bullets removed from bodies, bleeding survivors, and onlookers vowing revenge and claiming that the dead were shot from behind. Preliminary analysis from locally engaged staff indicates that the video is authentic and corresponds to the incident in Kajbar.

[1](#)3. (U) On June 20, in his regular back page column, "The Issue," Murtadi Al-Ghali reflects on the themes of occupation, emigration, and martyrdom while watching the Kajbar video with several colleagues. (Note: Although he does not name the video or its original website, Ghali's description of the film corresponds to the YouTube video. The link for this video has been sent to the Sudan Programs Group. End note.) Ghali describes the experience as creating "one of the worst days that I've ever experienced." Upon seeing the bloodshed, one of Ghali's colleagues states that Sudan is still under occupation. Ghali then writes that the image of one young boy's corpse from Kajbar reminds him of a famous image of a martyred Palestinian youth. He then states that the image of the Sudanese boy is even more painful and tragic than that of the Palestinian. Another colleague asserts that viewing the film makes him want to emigrate. Ghali then infers that the video provides proof that the protests were nonviolent. He argues that no family would knowingly take its young son to a violent protest. He poetically describes the innocence of the boy, the pain of the family, and the need for justice.

[1](#)4. (U) Ghali ends his column comparing the Kajbar tragedy to Darfur. He writes, "We have learned from this misfortune the depth of the Darfur tragedy, and the depth of cruelty of the Sudanese reality that we live in from painful moment to

painful moment." He calls for accountability for those who instigated the violence, and for all who perpetrated the crimes to watch the film and remember the images of the dead.

15. (C) COMMENT: In this column, Ghali touches upon many sensitive themes for the Arabic speaking world including occupation, emigration, and Palestinian suffering. What is exceptional is not the issues in and of themselves, but the fact that Ghali uses them not to condemn the West, but his own government. In another rare rhetorical move, Ghali also argues that the suffering of the Sudanese people, as embodied in one Sudanese boy, is greater than that of the Palestinians. When compared to other issues facing Sudan, the four casualties and overall Kajbar dam issue may at first appear to be minor or insignificant. Nonetheless, the power of this video to symbolize the suffering of the Sudanese people and the brutality of its government may resonate for weeks to come. END COMMENT.

FERNANDEZ